

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION INR-07

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-12 ISO-00 ARA-06 PM-04 NSC-05
SP-02 SS-15 CIAE-00 NSAE-00 DODE-00 /062 W
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R 031435Z MAY 77
FM AMEMBASSY MAPUTO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5733
INFO AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
AMEMBASSY LONDON

S E C R E T MAPUTO 0487

CAPE TOWN FOR EMBASSY

E.O. 11652: XGDS-2
TAGS: MASS, MZ, CU
SUBJECT: CUBAN PRESENCE IN MOZAMBIQUE

REF: (A) STATE 86727 (NOTAL); (B) MAPUTO 319; (C) MAPUTO 116

1. SUMMARY: AT THIS STAGE EMBASSY UNABLE TO GO MUCH BEYOND
WHAT WE HAVE REPORTED IN MAPUTO 319. OUR BEST ESTIMATE IS THAT
NUMBER OF CUBANS IN MOZAMBIQUE IS STILL LESS THAN 200, AL-
THOUGH FIGURE WILL PROBABLY RISE AS RESULT OF RECENT CASTRO
VISIT. MOZAMBIQUE LEADERS REGARD CUBANS AS THEIR "NATURAL ALLIES"
AND IT EMBASSY'S JUDGMENT THAT GPRM WOULD NOT BE RELUCTANT TO ASK
FOR CUBAN COMBAT FORCES IF SECURITY SITUATION ALONG RHODESIAN
BORDER CANNOT BE STABILIZED.
END SUMMARY

2. EMBASSY'S ASSESSMENT OF CURRENT AND FUTURE CUBAN ACTIVITY:
EMBASSY BELIEVES THERE ARE FROM 150 TO 200 CUBANS IN MOZAMBIQUE.
MOST ARE LOCATED IN NORTHERN PART OF COUNTRY. WHILE WE HAVE
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NO PRECISE BREAKDOWN ON WHAT THEY ARE DOING, WE KNOW THERE ARE:

- DOCTORS (LOCATION UNKNOWN); 9 NEW DOCTORS ARRIVED WITHIN
PAST MONTH;

- AGRICULTURAL ADVISORS AT CHIMOIO (EX-VILA PERRY);
AND

- MILITARY ADVISORS (REPORTEDLY AT CHIMOIO AND NAMPULA) WORKING WITH THE MOZAMBIQUE ARMY (FPLM) AND ZIMBABWEAN INSURGENTS. THERE ALSO ARE REPORTEDLY UP TO 15 TECHNICIANS WORKING ON SUGAR ESTATES ON IN SUGAR PROCESSING PLANTS IN THE BEIRA AREA.

ON THE BASIS OF COOPERATION AGREEMENT AND JOINT COMMUNIQUE WHICH WERE SIGNED DURING CASTRO VISIT, WE BELIEVE MORE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE, INCLUDING ADVISORS, IS PROBABLY IN THE OFFING.

3. MOZAMBIQUE VIEWS ON USE OF NON-AFRICANS IN MOZAMBIQUE: MOZAMBIKAN LEADERS REGARD CUBANS AS THEIR NATURAL ALLIES AND ARE NOT AVERSE TO ASK OR ACCEPT MILITARY ASSISTANCE FROM CUBA TO AID IN THE DEFENSE OF MOZAMBIQUE BORDERS OR TO HELP BRING THE RHODESIAN PROBLEM TO A SPEEDIER RESOLUTION. THAT THERE HAS NOT BEEN A BUILD-UP OF CUBAN TROOPS IN MOZAMBIQUE IS DUE, WE BELIEVE, PRINCIPALLY TO THE RESTRAINING INFLUENCE OF PRESIDENTS NYERERE AND KAUNDA, BOTH OF WHOM ARE OPPOSED TO USE OF NON-AFRICAN FORCES IN THE RHODESIAN CONFLICT. WE BELIEVE NYERERE'S DECISION TO SEND ELEMENTS OF TWO BATTALIONS OF TANZANIAN TROOPS INTO NORTHERN MOZAMBIQUE LATE LAST YEAR WAS AN EFFORT TO FORESTALL A POSSIBLE REQUEST BY MOZAMBIQUE FOR CUBAN TROOPS. WE DO NOT KNOW HOW MUCH LONGER NYERERE AND KAUNDA WILL BE ABLE TO EXERCISE A MODERATING INFLUENCE ON MACHEL AND THE FRELIMO LEADERSHIP VIS-A-VIS THE USE OF CUBAN TROOPS.

4. TRIP WIRES THAT MIGHT PROVOKE REQUEST FOR CUBAN ASSISTANCE: GIVEN MOZAMBIQUE'S WILLINGNESS TO ENTERTAIN ASSISTANCE FROM
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CUBA, EMBASSY HAS CONSISTENTLY REPORTED (MOST RECENTLY MAPUTO 116) THAT A MOZAMBIKAN REQUEST FOR CUBAN COMBAT TROOPS MIGHT BE PROVOKED IF:

- SOUTH AFRICA STEPPED-UP ITS ASSISTANCE TO THE SMITH REGIME OR RE-INTRODUCED SOUTH AFRICAN POLICE OR MILITARY UNITS INTO RHODESIA;

- RHODESIAN RAIDS INTO MOZAMBIQUE COULD NOT BE HALTED;

- ZIMBABWEAN INSURGENTS CONTINUED TO SUSTAIN SERIOUS MILITARY SET-BACKS; AND/OR

- UK PURSUED A NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT WHICH EXCLUDED A ROLE FOR ZIMBABWEAN FIGHTING FORCES.

OF THE ABOVE TRIP WIRES, THE ONE THAT MIGHT CURRENTLY MOTIVATE MACHEL INTO REQUESTING CUBAN COMBAT TROOPS IS THE UNABATED RHODESIAN RAIDS INTO MOZAMBIQUE AND THE CONTINUING HELPLESSNESS OF

THE MOZAMBICAN ARMY TO PREVENT THEM. AS LONG AS THE RHODESIAN
CONFLICT REMAINS UNRESOLVED, THE PROSPECT OF THE INTRODUCTION OF
LARGE NUMBERS OF CUBAN TROOPS INTO MOZAMBIQUE CANNOT BE RULED
OUT.
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